FEB. 26-27, 2004

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association

Executive Notes

Your Provincial Executive Council met in St. John's on **February 26** and Joint Council (Branch Presidents and Provincial Executive) met on **February 27**. This issue of Executive Notes is a summary of major discussions and decisions that occurred at these meetings.

For further information contact any member of Provincial Executive or the staff person as indicated.

Pathways to Programming and Graduation
A presentation was made to Provincial Executive by Brenda Smith, Director of the Student Support Services Division of the Department of Education on the Pathways program. Ms. Smith reviewed the level of personnel resourcing, recent changes and developments, and answered questions from members of Provincial Executive.

For further information contact Fred Douglas, President, or René Wicks, Professional Development Division.

President's Report
The President updated the Provincial Executive on his activities since the last meeting. Besides school visits and various meetings in his role as President, he has also attended several DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) Program graduations, the Board of Trade Business Outlook 2004 Seminar, pre-budget round table consultations, and the School Administrators Council's meeting on administration issues.

The President has been very active in the media as part of the aggressive, proactive media campaign to oppose government's financial restraint program.

For further information contact Fred Douglas, President.

Minister of Education
The new Minister of Education, the Honourable John Ottenheimer, his new Deputy Minister, Bruce Hollett, and Assistant Deputy Minister, Gerald Galway, were invited to speak to Provincial Executive on teacher and education issues. The Minister briefly addressed the Provincial Executive and Executive members had an opportunity to ask questions and to discuss issues with the Minister and his officials.Various topics discussed included class size, teacher workload, Pathways, PD and leadership training, inservicing of teachers, graduation requirements, declining enrollments, ISSPs, literacy, and programming.

For further information contact Fred Douglas, President, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Business from Standing Committees
TABLE OFFICERS

- The Association acknowledges and supports the efforts of the Canadian

Teachers' Federation in developing a policy on bisexual, gay, lesbian, transgender and two-spirited issues. The Association also supports the draft policy from CTF.

- The NLTA nominates Fred Douglas for the position of CTF Vice-President for 2004-05.
- The Labrador West Branch was authorized to proceed with the development of opening proposals for negotiations on the Labrador West Collective Agreement.

For further information contact Fred Douglas, President, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

EQUITY ISSUES COMMITTEE
The Provincial Executive Council accepted a revised mandate for the Equity Issues in Education Committee.

For further information contact Fred Wood, Chair, Equity Issues Committee, or Beverley Park, Professional Development Division.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS AND SERVICES
Seven pre-retirement seminars will be held in accordance with Association policy during the fall of 2004 in the following locations: Gander, Corner Brook, Stephenville, Grand Falls-Windsor, and three in St. John's. The dates and sites will be determined by the Benefits and Economic Services Division subject to hotel and presenter availability.For further information contact Winston Carter, Chair, Membership Benefits and Services Committee, or Stefanie Tuff, Benefits and Economic Services Division.

Committee on Early Career Teachers
As reported in the previous issue of Executive Notes, the Committee on Early Career Teachers has the mandate to examine and recommend to Provincial Executive ways to improve and increase the involvement of early career teachers (1-10 years' experience) in the Association, and consider how to maintain and improve Association services to teachers in light of changing demographics and declining financial resources.

Fourteen recommendations from the Committee on Early Career Teachers were accepted by Provincial Executive at this meeting. These covered such matters as ensuring that MUN students, substitute teachers and new teachers are aware of the services available through NLTA and are encouraged to be involved early in their careers.

Other Business
POTENTIAL STUDENTS' ASSISTANTS JOB ACTION
In the event that there is no agreement with the employer regarding teacher support for students with special needs during a withdrawal of services by student assistants prior to a possible student assistant job action on March 31, the NLTA position, as per the 2001 student assistant job action, will be maintained. That is, teachers should continue to do those duties being done prior to a withdrawal of services by student assistants but not take on any new responsibilities previously carried out by striking workers.

For further information contact Fred Douglas, President, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

ACCOUNTABILITY
A proposed policy on teacher accountability was accepted by Provincial Executive.

For further information contact Fred Douglas, President, or Beverley Park, Professional Development Division.

ELECTORAL COMMITTEE
The report of the 2002-03 Electoral Committee was presented to Executive. The 2004-05 Electoral Committee, following completion of the 2005 election for NLTA President and Vice-President, will give consideration to other balloting procedures such as individual mail-in ballots, and electronic voting, for future elections.

For further information contact Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

ISSPs
Teachers will be informed that they are no longer required to use the liability disclaimers when signing ISSPs. These disclaimers are no longer necessary based on recent correspondence by the Newfoundland and Labrador School Boards Association stating that the School Boards' insurers will be obligated to respond to any allegations of negligence.

For further information contact Lloyd Hobbs, Assistant Executive Director.

NLTA AWARDS
The following awards will be presented this year by the NLTA:

- Barnes Award -- Wayne Hallett
- Bancroft Award -- Bill Chaisson

For further information contact Fred Douglas, President.

Discussion Topics
The following topics were reviewed by Provincial Executive for follow-up or future discussion: First Steps Program; Income Tax receipts; communicable diseases and implications for teacher responsibilities at the school level; first aid supplies for schools; and first aid training for teachers

JOINT COUNCIL

Association Priorities
A detailed review of the Association's priorities for 2003-04 was presented to Joint Council. The NLTA administrative staff updated Provincial Executive and Branch Presidents on the objectives, timeframes and action updates. The five priorities are: negotiating a collective agreement; teacher accountability/assessment/professionalism; curriculum issues; quality of teachers' work life; and membership awareness.

For further information contact Fred Douglas, President or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Employee Assistance Program
A presentation was made to Joint Council by Marie Wall and Kathy Taylor-Rogers, Employee Assistance Program Coordinators with the NLTA. The EAP program is designed to assist teachers in facing multiple professional and personal challenges in their lives. The presentation included an overview of the program, referral issues, wellness promotion, EAP statistical comparisons from 1998-2003 and demographics of EAP usage.

For further information contact Marie Wall or Kathy Taylor-Rogers, Employee Assistance Program Coordinators, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Sexual Orientation, Schools and the Law
A presentation was made to Joint Council by Richard Blaquière, a teacher at Woodstock

High School in Woodstock, New Brunswick. The presentation entitled "The Politics and History of Sexual Orientation in Society, Schools, and the Law" was thought provoking and dealt with the issue of homophobia and its impact on students. The presentation traced the history of homophobia throughout the centuries. Part of the presentation involved stories and testimonials from students who were gay and the negative attitudes they experienced.

MUN Faculty of Education Initiatives
A presentation was made to Joint Council by Dr. Alice Collins, Dean of the Faculty of Education at Memorial University. Dr. Collins discussed the new Ph.D. program within the Faculty of Education, scheduled to begin in September 2004. She announced that the Faculty has been able to hire four new faculty in the last year and is hoping for two others for the upcoming year. She discussed two new initiatives in the area of education and expressed her desire and commitment to ensuring that teacher candidates have programs beyond the classroom. Dr. Collins distributed information on enrollments in graduate and undergraduate programs in the Faculty of Education as well as various educational brochures on careers in teaching.

Network of Innovative Schools Conference
A presentation was made to Joint Council by Bruce Lane, Learning Resources/Technology Teacher at Mary Queen of Peace School in St. John's on the Network for Innovative Schools Conference/Forum. The first NIS Conference was held in 2003 and over 80 people from across Newfoundland and Labrador gathered to find out more about the Network of Innovative Schools and GrassRoots projects as well as meet with representatives of schools who are already members of NIS. This year's Forum will focus on the integration of technology across the entire curriculum and its purpose will be to share innovative ideas and exemplary projects, discuss the role of NIS members and the importance of mentoring other schools.

The next conference will be held November 5-6, 2004 in Clarenville. The conference website is www.mqp.k12.nf.ca/nis.

Negotiations/Political Action Campaign
Joint Council was updated on the current status of negotiations for a new collective agreement. President Fred Douglas addressed the issues of wage freezes and layoffs and that the NLTA position is that these approaches by the Williams' government will harm the provincial economy and have a negative impact on communities, education and children.

Lloyd Hobbs, Assistant Executive Director, informed Joint Council of meetings held to date concerning negotiations. The members of the NLTA Negotiating Team have met and received an in-service on all issues around the collective bargaining process. The members of the Negotiating Team for the upcoming round of bargaining are: Kevin Foley (Chair), Mealey Mountain Collegiate, Happy Valley-Goose Bay; Rhea Diamond, Northern Peninsula/ Labrador South Board Office; Leo Freeborn, St. Boniface All Grade, Ramea; Jim Hibbs, Botwood Collegiate, Botwood; Jackie Maloney, Christ the King School, Rushoon; Ethel Park, Matthew Elementary, Bonavista; Fred Wood, Queen Elizabeth Regional High, Foxtrap; Lloyd Hobbs, NLTA Assistant Executive Director; and Perry Downey, Benefits and Economic Services Division.

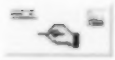
Lesley-Ann Browne, Communications Officer, presented phases one and two of the political action campaign that have aired on radio, television and in print. The message from NLTA, teachers and parents has been clear – we cannot accept a wage freeze, we need an infusion of teachers rather than fewer teachers, and workload issues must be addressed.

NLTA Policy Changes
A number of changes in policy statements since the November 2003 Joint Council

meeting were approved by Joint Council. These policies provide direction for continuity of decisions and guidance to those who take positions on behalf of the Association. The amended policies include: Special Interest Councils; Election of the President and Vice-President by province-wide vote; school preparedness; physical conditions under which teachers work; and accountability.

For further information contact Fred Douglas, President or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

Group Insurance Renewal



A presentation was made to Joint Council by Don Ash, Benefits and Economic Services Division, on Group Insurance Renewals. The presentation reviewed basic life renewals, deductions for the 2004-05 policy year, renewals for voluntary life, long-term disability, reasons for the premium increases, the 2002-03 loss ratio, and various options available to deal with the increased costs.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Provincial Executive is scheduled for **April 23 and 24** in St. John's. The next meeting of Joint Council is scheduled for **November 26 and 27** in St. John's.

For further information contact Fred Douglas, President, or Edward Hancock, Executive Director.

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